

History of the 10th Amendment

To better understand the modern day position of the **10th Amendment** in our culture, we have to look back at the history of this Amendment and the reasons the Founding Fathers added it in the **Bill of Rights**.

If you remember your history, you will remember that during the Revolutionary War, on July 2, 1776, the thirteen colonies all declared their independence from Great Britain at once. The day the declaration was voted upon and passed was July 2, not July 4 as most people think. The decision was publicly announced for the first time on July 4 and that is why Americans celebrate independence on that day. [You can learn more about the Declaration of Independence here.](#)

As soon as the thirteen colonies declared independence, they became thirteen individual sovereign states or countries. Each state created its own new government. They had no legal ties to the other states except in the few arrangements they had made to cooperate together in their war against Great Britain. It would be as if the United States, Canada, Mexico, England and France all got together as a group today and declared war on China. The leaders of these five countries would get together and make agreements about who would do what in the war and how they would cooperate. This wouldn't make them all one great big country. They would still be five separate, but cooperating countries.

That was the state of things after July 4, 1776. It should be stated that the new states were already studying ways to formally join themselves together at this time, but they hadn't done it yet. On the same day a declaration of independence from Britain was proposed to Congress by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, which was June 6, 1776, he also proposed "That a plan of confederation be prepared and transmitted to the respective Colonies for their consideration and approbation." The Congress immediately put together an exploratory committee to consider this issue. [You can read the Lee Resolution here,](#) in which Richard Henry Lee made his proposal.



Richard Henry Lee